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Department of State

SECRET

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SENT TO: Amconsul Geneva TOCAH 165

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE PRESIDENT

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QUOTE July 21, 1959

Dear Chris:



Thank you for your report. You certainly are having an unproductive and difficult time with Gromyko. I quite agree that this cannot continue for long. However, I do feel that if we take any action to terminate things this week it would inescapably transfer the burden of negotiation to the Vice President during his meeting with the Soviets over the coming weekend. I see no reason on the other hand why you should not tell Gromyko privately, as I gather you have already intimated to him, that unless the negotiations begin to show more progress in the near future it will not be possible to continue. A two or three days' recess might possibly serve to indicate publicly that we are considering terminating the farce. I have just been informed that Menshikov has been in touch with Murphy and apparently

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apparently has some information to convey. Maybe this will have some bearing on our decision. In any event we should see things more clearly in about a week.

I thought your statement yesterday was excellent.

P.S.: I have just seen Ambassador Menshikov who has verbally given me a rough translation of Khrushchev's reply to my letter which was carried to him by Koslov. The greater part of the letter is an expression of readiness and even a keen desire to exchange visits. He indicated he would prefer that his visit here should take place after the termination of the hottest part of our weather. However, when he discussed the condition I laid down -- namely that there should be some degree of progress at Geneva which would justify a Summit meeting, he simply played the same old record. He thinks there is no virtue in our arguing that without such progress, meetings at the highest level would have no reason and no beneficial result.

Tomorrow the State Department will make a careful translation of the letter and we will start drafting a reply which will, of course, be sent to you for comment before dispatching. We will send it through Menshikov, but Thompson will be provided a copy.

Incidentally, in discussing a possible visit here, he mentioned a period of some ten to fifteen days and observed that it would make little difference to him whether the visit was formal or informal.

As of this moment no real progress is observable.

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I think it is important that this whole matter be kept confidential for the time being.

With best regard,

D.E. UNQUOTE



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